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THE HINDERERS.

IDA WHIPPLE BENHAM.

We're careful souls, we're very careful souls;
Our touch is velvet and our step is down;
Our speech is honey served in painted bowls;
We smile, but never frown.

We're very careful souls — why should one wait,
Careless of shelter, till the tempest pours?
Whatever task delays without the gate,
We hide us safe indoors.

"Hush!" is our watchword, whispered under breath:
Our motto this, "Let well enough alone!"
We burrow, dim with dust, nor wait for death
To hide us 'neath its stone.

There are who lift their faces to the sky,
Sun-fronted, sun-illuminated, strong of hand;
We tremble as their earnest ranks go by
To labor in the land!

They sow, they reap, they do, they even dare!
We hinder, cautiously, not overmuch,
Laying a hand on progress here and there
To thwart her with a touch.

We're very careful souls; we would not see
This venerable order pass away;
The hoary past is what it used to be—
A pattern for to-day.

Yet should the loud reformer chance to win,
And should the world, at last, by him be led,
We careful souls would hold it then no sin
To rise and eat his bread.

MYSTIC, CONN.

—*The Independent.*

THE NEW WOMANHOOD.

MARY A. LIVERMORE.

So long as education was denied woman no advance was possible to her. During the centuries that preceded the Christian era, and for centuries after, there were, here and there, in many countries, eminent women who came into possession of power, privilege and culture. But they were the exception, and not the rule. For nearly two hundred years, in our own country, there was almost no provision whatever for even the rudimentary education of girls. A high school for girls was not established in Massachusetts until 1852, and then amid opposition—while schools and colleges for boys had been in existence for two centuries, supported mainly by public funds.

The founding of Vassar College for women, in 1865, marks an era in their history. Two or three women's colleges had preceded Vassar, but for some reason had made no impression on the public mind. Grand old Oberlin had admitted women and colored students some twenty-five years before. The insane color phobia of those days made it exceedingly difficult for women to enroll themselves at Oberlin, but when they did, they were admitted to the same college curriculum as their brothers. But when Vassar opened its doors to women, it brought in a new day. East, West and North, women were petitioning colleges for admission, and a debate concerning the wisdom of granting their prayer sprung up all over the country. Vassar gave them entrance to her halls of study, and now, twenty-six years later, the colleges and univer-

sities which admit women are more in number than those which refuse them.

"Forty thousand girls are now studying in colleges," says Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer, ex-President of Wellesley. And while a majority of the tens of thousands who have graduated during the last twenty years have married and carried an ennobling influence into domestic life, others have entered professions and various departments of art, literature and science, sometimes distinguishing themselves by good work, of which public mention has been made. The United States Census, of 1880, reported *two thousand four hundred and eighty-two registered women physicians, one hundred and sixty women ministers, and seventy-five women lawyers*. The number in 1890 was vastly greater.

Six hospitals have been founded by women physicians in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco and Minneapolis, all of which are in successful operation. The Methodist, Unitarian, Universalist, Christian and Free Baptist denominations admit women to their theological schools, and all ordain women, except the Methodist. Women are admitted to practise law before the Supreme Court of the United States who have been members of the bar of the highest court of any State or Territory for three years. Two legal papers have been founded by women lawyers in Chicago, one, *The Legal News*, having had a successful existence of twenty-two years.

Since the war, women have organized missionary, philanthropic, temperance, educational and political organizations on a scale of great magnitude. They have developed a capacity for public affairs, which receives large recognition at the present time. They are elected, or appointed to such offices as county clerk, register of deeds, pension agent, prison commissioner, State librarian, overseer of the poor, school superintendent and school supervisor. They serve as executors and administrators of estates, trustees and guardians of property, engrossing clerks of State legislatures, superintendents of women's State prisons, college presidents and professors, members of boards of State charities, lunacy and correction, police matrons and post-mistresses.

They are accountants, pharmacists, cashiers, telegraphers, stenographers, typewriters, dentists, book-keepers, authors, lecturers, journalists, painters, architects and sculptors. In many of these positions women serve with men, who graciously acknowledge the practical wisdom and virtue they bring to their duties. The Hon. Carroll D. Wright, Chief of the National Bureau of the Statistics of Labor, in a recent report has announced *the number of remunerative occupations now open to women, as three hundred and forty-two*. While women are still hampered by unjust laws, which are a blot on the national escutcheon, many of the States have annulled some of the most oppressive and barbarous, and women are enabled to enter into business enterprises heretofore closed to them. — *The Independent.*

Dr. Edward Everett Hale is shortly to commence a serial story, on life as lived in the Boston of to-day. It will touch the condition of our every day life in New England most closely. This story is to be published exclusively in his weekly paper, the *Boston Commonwealth*.